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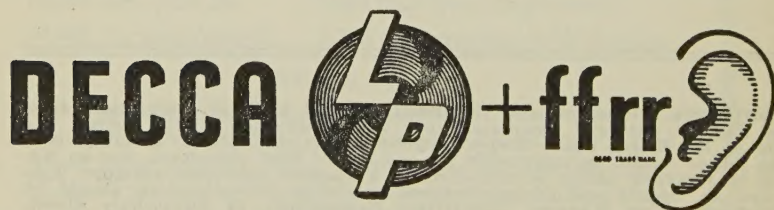
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PERPLEXITY AND PASSION

THE EDITOR

ONE or two of the articles in this issue of *THE LIFE* are concerned with the application of some of the traditional aspects of the Church to the modern scene. The Passion of our Lord has been described in the form of a novel; the essential Christian way described by St Benedict has been transposed into an oriental setting. There is no end to the questions that might be raised in this matter of application. How far are these beliefs and practices of the Church unalterable, how far do they demand a withdrawal from the contemporary scene and a retirement into an 'other-worldly' setting, how far can the work of application and transposition go without endangering the essential purity, the uncontaminated perfection of the Christian life?

These questions have been to the fore in the minds of many on account of the recent events in France. The priest-workers' claim was that the purity of the faith must be brought to the proletariat by sharing in the 'Passion' of the proletariat. The life of the Church, they maintained, was not a high and remote reservoir which was simply to be poured out upon the people. It was the life of the people themselves, changed and transformed; as the life of the Word emptying himself and in his death becoming identified in some way with sin. The authority of the Church regarded the attempted identification, while excellent in itself, as taking the wrong means and thus endangering the purity and perfection of the true Christian life. But such problems do not belong to these nation-wide movements of adaptation alone. They present themselves to every Christian who desires to live according to Christ's way. In a world largely pagan, run on competitive lines where every man with initiative and 'go' is out to reach the top of his profession, how is one to preserve the integrity of Christian justice and Christian truth? For success a degree of discreet lying and cheating goes hand in hand with the necessity of getting

the better of one's fellow competitor. To adhere purely to truth and justice in the order of charity seems often to leave the family man a long way behind in the race for subsistence; and often too he has a fair family to think of, while the successful man may be concerned for himself alone. Charity, says St Paul, is not 'ambitious'; this principle seems to some to require a retirement from the world, a trek towards some unrealizable and historical 'age of faith' when every man was content with the sufficient.

In these problems, whether personal or communal, the Christian turns to authority for guidance. What does the Church teach and direct in all these matters to do with Christian life? Yet even here the Christian often finds little satisfaction. The gospels are clear and simple, but they belong to the eternal. Moreover, they often appear to contain confusing paradoxes. To turn the other cheek, indeed, is simple enough in theory; but then the Christian must also resist evil. So the perplexed Christian turns to the officials of the Church to guide him in his task of applying the general Christian theme to his daily contemporary existence.

But here again he may find further perplexity. True enough, the highest authority on the rare occasions when it is fully exercised in matters of faith and morals speaks with a divine assurance. But God uses weak and fallible instruments in his work of sanctification. It would be imprudent to regard the word of every spiritual director or every parish priest as infallible. The human element inevitably, indeed necessarily, enters into such guiding judgments as are given by God's ministers. Only too easily may the perplexed layman conclude that the authority to whom he has turned is either too remote from the contemporary scene to provide any effective rules of application or that he is swayed by all manner of purely human influences, by politics or nationality, by temperament or the need for hard cash. It would be denying the true nature of the Church to try to maintain that the admonition of every Church authority was a direct and unmediated utterance of God himself. The mystery of the Church lies in the fact that the divine authority resides in human beings who are yet themselves subject to the effects of original sin; and in the exer-

cise of that authority they call forth in their fellow members the corresponding exercise of supernatural obedience. God does not speak through dead instruments but through living human persons.

To return to the example of the French events, the priest-workers and their supporters might suspect that human element in the form of politics and parties had influenced the judgment of the authority that ordered them to retreat, indeed to lay down their arms. Their authorised superiors told them that the form of application they were attempting was not to be. And the perplexity of these apostles was obvious in what they said and wrote at the time.

But it is just at this point that perplexity for the Christian ceases, and for the non-Christian begins. The spirit of submission revealed by the majority of these French Catholics, the calm manner in which the Dominicans, with the spotlight of the world press focussed upon them, accepted the changes and removals imposed on them by Rome, leaves the outsider amazed and incredulous. He may be excused for confusing the exercise of authority with authoritarianism because the usual form of obedience of which he is aware today is the obedience of the party-line. His perplexity may lead him to suppose this submission to be another form of the abject self-accusation of the victim of the party trials. But if he does so judge he will be entirely wrong.

Within the Church perplexity ceases at this point because it is the point of the Passion, and it is only through the Passion that the eternal principles are applied to the contemporary scene and bring forth the triumphant life of the risen Christ. It was no abject submission to 'the party line' of the Father that led our Lord to abandon the success he was achieving with the people for the desolation of the Cross. It was a virile and tremendous act of his human will that accepted obedience to his Father's decree. Similarly the obedience of these priests and religious is the fulfilment of the same Christian vitality. In the Passion the decree of death came not only through the internal knowledge of a divinely illumined mind, but through the exercise of an external authority mingled, apparently inextricably, with

human frailty. The High Priest of the day decreed that it was expedient that one man should die for the people; and even Pilate was reminded that whatever authority he exercised to be effective must be from God. Not that the Passion of the present day is brought about by a divine religion corrupted by human weakness; Calvary was the source of the streams of blood and water that were to preserve the life of the Church from any repetition of that type of corruption. It is only the perplexed outsider, again, who tries to draw a parallel between the Sanhedrin and the present structure of the Holy Office.

Remembering that it was, on the last analysis, the Father who delivered up his Son, we can discover this same pattern in the great spiritual works which continue the redemption and apply the eternal principles to contemporary life. We may take the simple example of the apparitions of our Lady which have done so much to bring the life of her Son into the lives of modern men. Bernadette or the Portuguese peasant children are met at first by the incredulity and even opposition of the authorities to whom they go for direction. The visionary finds a cold welcome awaiting him at the presbytery. But when it is a case of the divine working of redemption the effect of that work is achieved as soon as perplexity gives place to the simple obedience of the Cross. The 'party line' knows no divine authority mysteriously revealed in ministers who may be in themselves weak and fallible. But all the saints have reached the heights of spiritual effectiveness not only through a vivid devotion to the historic record of the Passion at Jerusalem but also through misunderstandings, opposition and even persecution from the good people constituted by divine Providence and authority to be their superiors. Even the 'little way' of the Saint of Lisieux reveals this fact. It is the Father who delivers up his Son to death; and when we find today perplexity giving place to simple obedience within the Church we know that the redemption of Calvary is still working like a leaven, and we look forward to yet greater spiritual life in the Church. It is in this way that the eternal and the traditional seeds of the Christian life come to germinate, grow and bear fruit in the world today.

MONASTICISM TODAY

JOHN FITZSIMONS

THERE is always a fascination about trying to discern patterns in the course of the world's history, and this perhaps as much as anything else explains the phenomenally popular, as distinct from professional, interest in Professor Toynbee's *Studies in History*. A more particular source of fascination is picking out the turning points of history. Toynbee, for instance, suggests that the decline of the West began in what had hitherto been considered the high Middle Ages, to be precise in the years immediately preceding the pontificate of Hildebrand. To be more precise he tracks it down to a small action on the part of Hildebrand before he became pope, when he hired thugs to counter-attack the thugs who were stealing the offerings of Peter's pence from the altar of St Peter's. For Toynbee this appeal to the very secular arm by the spiritual power was the tiny crack in the great structure which was eventually to have momentous consequences.

One may or may not accept this interpretation, but it is a pleasant occupation, a game that all can play. My own choice is the broken earthenware sieve of St Benedict's nurse. We know the story from the *Dialogues* of St Gregory: how St Benedict put the pieces together again in a seemingly miraculous way. Then the gossip started, and following the gossip came the crowds. They drove him out from Enfide into the wilderness, first to Subiaco and then to Monte Cassino. What debt does Western civilization not owe to that sieve? One may be tempted to dismiss it as a nice conceit, but one cannot deny that out of the three years' seclusion at Subiaco came one of the great men of history whose contribution to European civilization, through his monks, was greater than any other. Most of the nations of Europe were converted to Christianity and learned the arts of peace from men who were trained through or lived under the Rule of St Benedict.

The point does not need labouring: it is a commonplace of the history of Europe. There was Augustine in England,

Swithbert and Willibrord in the Netherlands, Boniface in Germany, Ansgar in Scandinavia. Art, culture, crafts, peace—all came as a by-product of the monastic life and were preserved, grew and had decisive influence at a time when the whole of Europe was in flux. In later ages monasticism was to provide people with a lead in agriculture too—in this connection in England one has only to think of Evesham, Glastonbury and of the abbeys in Kent.

But Benedictinism is not confined to any age, nor to any special area of the world, nor indeed is it tied to any particular form of culture or of civilization. There is an amazing example in recent years of the fertility of the Benedictine idea: the monastery at Siluvaigiri near Salem in the State of Madras. In 1950 six Indians went to the Abbey of St André in Belgium for their novitiate and two monks from St André went out to help transform the community, already founded some time before, into a Benedictine Abbey. The six Indian monks returned in 1952 and on their arrival commenced singing the Divine Office, and started an Indian novitiate. They operate a small farm and live on its produce. They wear the coarse cotton robes of the Indian wandering monks, the Sanyassis, but of a darker orange-brown colour, not the usual saffron yellow. The habit consists of two pieces, one fastened around the hips, another slung over the shoulders. The monks walk barefoot and, like Indian monks, abstain from meat, eggs, fish and spirits. There are no choir stalls or benches, and during the Divine Office they squat on the floor or stand. The language of their liturgy is Latin, but their hope is that eventually it may be Hindu. Already the community has made considerable impact on the surrounding villages and people come great distances to the monastery to obtain medicines and to learn from the agricultural methods practised by the monks.

This new initiative on the part of the sons of St Benedict recalls strongly the opening words of that perhaps over-romanticized but nonetheless remarkable essay of Newman on 'The Mission of the Benedictine Order': 'As the physical universe is sustained and carried on in dependence on certain centres of power and laws of operation, so the course of the social and political world, and of that great religious organ-

ization, the Catholic Church, is found to proceed for the most part from the presence or action of definite persons, places, events and institutions, as the visible course of the whole.' In other words, the Church, as the Body of Christ, is incarnated in space and time. It is contingent on history and on geography, and there are different moments in the human becoming of the Church, just as there are of the spirit of St Benedict. Between Evesham and Siluvaigiri stretch six centuries and half the earth's circumference, but there is a unity, the unity of organic development. The Church itself in its development is moving continually towards its goal, the total Christ, the 'complete' Christ. Its end is the *pleroma*, for every society and social form in which the Church incarnates itself contributes to the completion of Christ. So the Church is not merely catholic in fact, but in intention too. She must become, and must be, a complete body, reaching perfect manhood, that maturity which is proportioned to the completed growth of Christ, as St Paul expresses it.

Yet in a sense this is all a by-product of the main work; the main work of the Church and of bodies, religious orders, congregations, institutes, that God has raised up in the Church to assist in the work is that in all things God may be glorified. The Church itself in its transcendental aspect is committed to this eucharistic work unchanged and unchanging, just as is the spirit of a religious order. The essentials of the Benedictine life remain the same: the spirit of interior peace; the regular praise of God in the Divine Office; the security of a rule; the stability of a society; the *familia* of the monastic community. But their impact on the world changes, as the world itself evolves. We ourselves are living at a period of history when this evolution is much more striking than in times past.

There is no doubt that we are living in an age of transition, at a time when the old world is in a state of decay and of disintegration. Man, as Pope Pius XII has said, is in process of being invested with a new spiritual physiognomy. At such a time the Spirit, using the instruments to hand, must renew the face of the earth and breathe a soul into the new world that is emerging. As Père de Lubac has put it,

‘For some time we have been assisting not merely at extraordinary events which are changing the surface of the globe, but also at an event at a deeper level which is changing something in man himself. In this universe of ours, a universe in course of psychic evolution, however fixed its essential framework since the appearance of the human race, consciousness expands at certain moments and perceives new values and new dimensions. It seems obvious that we ourselves are living through one of these moments of awakening and transformation.’

One aspect of this emergence of a new world is particularly important: individualism has run its course and there is a widespread and deeply conscious movement towards a greater appreciation of the value of community. This is more than a mere reaction away from individualism towards collectivism, and it is as pronounced in the Church as in the world. It is no accident that these last years have seen the publication of the two great encyclicals, *Mystici Corporis* and *Mediator Dei*, the former dealing with the unity of all Christians in the Mystical Body of Christ and the latter on the liturgy as a collective or common act. It is no accident that in the realm of economic production there have been experiments ranging from the crude collectivism of the kolhoz of the U.S.S.R. to the Christian co-operatives of Antigonish, Nova Scotia. These developments are all part of a pattern: the reassertion of the fact that man is a social being and that he finds his fulfilment in togetherness. Yet this world that is coming into being, and seeking community, is a post-Christian world or a world that is largely indifferent to Christianity. It is much more desolate and discouraging than was the pre-Christian world that faced the infant Church in the first age: there is now such an intolerable distance between man and man.

It may seem paradoxical to suggest that the Benedictine ideal lived and made real is of great importance to the world today, because essentially it is other-worldly. If one thing is clear about the growth and vigour of the early Benedictine communities in Northwestern Europe it is that they were in no way dependent on civilization. They did not need it, and in fact the opposite came to be true: civilization

depended on them. The only support they needed was that of God and of the good earth, and they could thrive and grow. They were based and rooted in the eternal power of God and in the most enduring of earthly things, and so were little affected by the contingent happenings around them. In fact their survival had a great deal to do with the birth and growth of Europe. But this is not the place to indulge in a nostalgic panegyric of the past—however heartening it might be.

What of today? Today men need, and need desperately, a sense of community. And, in the writer's opinion, there are three fundamental communities: the parish, the domestic family and the monastic family. They are all analogous, with the domestic family as the prototype of the other two, both of them religious and both having their bearing on the domestic family. The family is the elementary human reality. It revolves round the facts of birth, life and growth. It assures to man his everyday life: roof, food, clothes, the rudiments of knowledge and human relationship. In the Church the parish is the centre of spiritual life, and we are born into the parish family by baptism. The parish responds to the elementary and daily needs of those who belong to it: it is the environment of one's personal life, not in the world but in the Church. In it also one acquires the rudiments of Christian knowledge. Parallel to birth and baptism is religious profession whereby a monk joins a community. This community is not a theoretical ideal but a practical example of the family impregnated with the Christian faith and liturgy.

At this point it may be advisable to develop the meaning of the word 'community', and to clarify the distinction between community and society. A community is based on having things in common, and the most fundamental of these is the biological community, the bond of blood between members of a family, of all who are of the same kith and kin. A community, because it springs from the reality, whether biological or psychological, of people who have something in common, is untidy. But all the members of a community have a sense of belonging, a feeling of fellowship. And so the bond develops into something more than

the simple fact of something held in common—it becomes a living human reality by a spirit of cohesion which begins with mutual respect and develops into the love of friendship. Now most communities are also societies, i.e., besides the *fact* of a common life there is also a *desire* for a common good. The group has a purpose, and there must be an authority to direct the members towards that purpose. While allowing scope for individual initiatives and skills, this authority will direct the over-all activity so that all will co-operate together to produce the common good of the group. This picture is as valid for the monastic family as it is for the domestic family.

There is one interesting point: the more complicated the life, the more detailed and difficult becomes the task of organizing men and things towards a common end. Thus the task of the chief of a tribe of primitives organizing his tribe-community to form a society will be comparatively simple, whereas in our modern industrial society the task of government is immensely complicated. But, as though by way of compensation, the community rites, customs and traditions of a primitive tribe may be very elaborate, while in our modern urban civilization ties are weakened and men's togetherness is expressed by obedience to law rather than by a sense of community.

In a society cohesion comes from the framework of law; in a community cohesion and solidarity come from friendship, the primary product of sharing a common life.

All this is very relevant to the Benedictine life today. In the modern world man has failed to find community. Whatever cohesion he has with his fellows comes more and more from laws imposed on him from without. In other words, society (and very often this means the power and authority of the State) grows while community declines, or is almost non-existent. The family is in eclipse as a community, because it has suffered the ravages of individualism and because the Christian principles of family life have been neglected. And yet the family is the primary community, and by its cohesion, strength and dignity will stand or fall the possibility of any greater social links between men in other communities, political or economic. Nor are many

parishes communities in any true sense, but are rather haphazardly chosen geographical areas where the parishioners are passive spectators of the liturgy—which should be the common prayer—who derive their sense of belonging from money-raising activities.

The importance of the third, the monastic, community can be best illustrated by a parallel. When the Deposit of Faith needed a deep shelter in which to survive the barbarian invasions and the disintegration of the Roman Empire, the monasteries came into being. In them religion *and* civilization weathered the storm, to bring a new greatness and magnificence, a growth and development, both to the Church and to the world. Surely the monasteries have a similar role to fulfil today—and this quite independent of the world—by living the Benedictine life as the Rule lays it down, as it has grown and been modified over the centuries.

Obviously the motive for this is not the good of mankind or of civilization. Once again as a by-product of the Benedictine life the world can be reborn, for those who seek God first are the only successful re-creators of society. The virtues of the domestic family will be preserved in the monastic family under the guidance and authority of the father, the Abbot. The community worship of God which should be the sign of the living parish will be preserved in the devout and worthy rendering of the liturgy, the Mass and the Divine Office. In a sense the common meal is the sign of natural community, the domestic family; while the liturgy is the sign of the supernatural community, the parish family. The courtesies and almost sacramental character of meals in the monastic refectory are the exemplar of the love, friendship and sharing which should be found in the domestic family. The liturgy which is the practical expression of sacramental life in the parish family is the ceremonial matrix for the prayer and life of the religious family. Above all there is the example of men dwelling together in friendship—a living community. It is true that because they live under a rule they also form a society, but the monastic community is so much more. It is a school of perfection, where respect, obedience and love are the fruits of many dwelling together in one.

In a changing world, a world of division, a world that hungers for God, the cenobitical family stands apart. It is stable, because anchored in the service of God. It is united in obedience to the Abbot, and because of the charity of its members in the bond of perfection. From its beginnings monasticism has always been inspired by what is most fundamental and yet what is most creative in the life of Christ as portrayed in the Gospels. St Benedict gathered together a small group of men to serve and praise God through their work and through their prayer. Together they were to seek the kingdom of God and his justice. It has been rightly pointed out that what was added unto them was the whole civilization of Europe. And the end is not yet.



CHRIST IN THE KORAN

MAJID FAKHRY

OF the three monotheistic religions of the Semites, Islam was the last to make its appearance upon the stage of history in the third decade of the seventh century. Unlike its two predecessors, Judaism and Christianity, its appearance was attended by a series of epoch-making events which mark the eclipse of the two great empires of the time, Byzantium and Persia. And, whereas the beginnings and development of the two latter religions are surrounded by comparative obscurity, historians know almost all the significant stages in the rise and development of Islam, which forces itself, like a cataclysm, upon the attention of the civilized world by dint of military prowess. One significant feature of the new faith, as it emerges out of the dark background of Western Arabia, is that, from the start, it places itself consciously and deliberately in line with the original Abrahamanic revelation, from which our faith takes its source. Muhammad, not unlike our Lord, declares that he did not come to destroy but to fulfil, and that, like

the prophets of old who preceded him, he was the bearer of good news (Koran 2, 119 and 4, 162) whom God had sent to his fellow-countrymen to preach the unity of God and the inevitability of the Last Day. He did not omit, it is true, to lay claim to a certain pre-eminence which pertained to him by reason of his position as the last of the prophets (or their 'seal') to whom the ultimate and complete revelation of the divine word had come of late (61, 9; 5, 3). What is more, like the prophets who had preceded him, his own coming was foretold, he alleged, by his predecessors—and in particular by the specially favoured 'Jesus, Son of Mary' (61, 6), whom God had sent to Israel in order to confirm and complete the revelation which had been imparted to Moses and the Prophets.¹

But it is not with the validity of this claim that we are concerned here, but rather with the reverse problem: namely, the view of Christ which emerges from the reading of the Koran. This, it should be observed, is a problem which is not without relevance to Christian theology itself. For, if it appears upon examination that the Messianic concept plays a role of some importance in the new, as it did in the old, faith of the Semites, then we have a further confirmation of the centrality of this concept, regardless of whether it is avowed to coincide with the person of Jesus of Nazareth or not. Not, to be sure, that a confirmation of Christ six centuries after his earthly career by an outlandish Semitic 'prophet' would make any difference to the validity of his claim to be the Messiah, but rather that this added testimony from such an unexpected quarter cannot fail to puzzle and impress.

Now the view of Christ which emerges from a study of the Koran, it should be noted at the outset, although impressive, is by no means a consistent one. In the first place, 'Jesus, Son of Mary' is stated to be a mere human whom God had created, like Adam, from earth (3, 59) and had sent, like the rest of the prophets, with a divine commission to the Jews (5, 17), to whom he was to be an example and an

¹ Later Muslim theologians find a basis for this alleged prophecy in the Johannine reference to the coming of the Paraclete (John 14, 16; 16, 7-8).

arbiter in their conflicts (43, 59). But despite this distinction, it is not suggested here that he was endowed with any special status, but is rather said to be a 'mere servant of God' who came to enjoin Israel to obey God, 'his Lord and their Lord'. Here, as it were, the humanity of Christ, with all the humility which attended it, is brought out, but not in order that it might lead thereby naturally and logically to the acknowledgment of his divinity. Rather is this divinity itself questioned and ultimately denied in striking and paradoxical terms. This mere servant of God, Jesus, Son of Mary, is stated to have been miraculously born from the Virgin (3, 47 and 19, 20-21) and is, in addition, said to have spoken as a mere babe to plead with the critics who accused her of in chastity (19, 28ff). But the substance of this first utterance of Christ the babe ('Verily, I am the servant of God'), instead of confirming his special status as the son of God, amounts precisely to a refutation of his divinity. Jesus the babe is made, as it were, to engage in a polemic against himself purporting to refute his divinity, even before he is invested with this extraordinary quality by his eventual followers.

This paradox, however, seems to have eluded the author of the Koran. And so did the paradox lurking in the parallel assertion that Christ was indeed the Word of God and his spirit, which he imparted to Mary, the Chosen One (4, 171 and 3, 45) whom 'he had purified and preferred to all the women of the earth' (3, 42). An attempt to explain this assertion away is ineptly made, to be sure, by describing Mary's conception as the outcome of 'God casting forth' his word or Spirit into her; but this is far from resolving the difficulty inherent in the original assertion. For, whereas the creation of other humans, notably Adam, is spoken of in terms of a divine 'fiat' or command, the Virgin Birth is described as an 'infusion' or a 'casting forth' of the Spirit of God into the Mother of Christ. And when it is recalled what a decisive chasm between God and man the Koran creates, 'this special and extraordinary demonstration of divine favour towards a mere human mother acquires added significance as evidence for the validity of Christ's status as a supernatural being.

In addition to his miraculous birth and his supernatural status as the Word or Spirit of God, the Koran endows Christ with the power for miracle-making to a degree which far exceeds anything ascribed to such 'prophets' as Moses, Jonas, Solomon or even Muhammad himself.² The main miracles of the canonical Gospels are mentioned, but what is more, a number of miracles which the Gospels do not record are ascribed to Christ. For instance, he is stated to have made sparrows out of clay and caused them to fly by infusing life into them (5, 110 and 3, 43);³ to have brought down from heaven a laden table for his disciples to eat from (5, 113-115);⁴ to have divined what a group of Jews had stored away in their houses (5, 49), and finally to have been miraculously assumed into heaven (3, 55). To this category of apocryphal miracles must also be assigned the miracle of Christ the babe pleading with his mother's taunters, already mentioned, and which the Gospel of the Infancy reports in the opposite sense. (C. 1.) But let it not be imagined that these miracles are advanced here as evidence of Christ's divinity as are the miracles in the Gospels. For it is precisely this thesis which the Koran is concerned to repudiate, with a view to reserving divinity to the Almighty as his exclusive prerogative. Accordingly, in reporting these miracles it makes the interesting, but inadmissible, proviso that Christ performed these miracles by 'God's leave'. In another place, this power for miracle-making is represented as a token of divine favour which God graciously conferred on Christ, as he was wont to do in dispensing his favours and graces freely, but which did not imply any special privilege or pre-eminence pertaining, *sui generis*, as it were, to Christ.

Thus the nature of the Koranic testimony for Christ, despite the extravagant terms of praise in which it is

² It is noteworthy here that Muhammad, who is declared throughout the Koran as a mere human, is not credited there with any miracles whatsoever besides the transmission of the Koran which is considered to be *the* miracle par excellence (17, 88).

³ A record of this miracle is found in the apocryphal 'Gospel of the Infancy' (C. 36).

⁴ A reference, probably, to the Eucharist.

couched, remains ambiguous and confused. The humanity of Christ alone is admitted, but not his divinity. Even the miraculous and supernatural qualities with which he is loaded are shorn of their ultimate significance as probative evidence of his divinity. The assumption underlying this recognition of his power to perform miracles is that it is derived from God. Needless to say, such an assumption runs counter to the whole spirit of the canonical Gospels in which Christ's miraculous deeds are performed through his own power in his capacity as God—a power which, in his divine wisdom, he never wields in his own favour, as Satan would have him do at the beginning of his earthly career. But, despite this whittling away of the supernatural significance of Christ's miracles, the Koranic record is not without its value. The striking feature of this record is that it is not in what it affirms, but rather in what it denies, that it contradicts the spirit of historical Christianity. In this limited sense, Islam can be described with St John of Damascus as a mere Christian heresy, which errs not by affirmation but by denial, not by assertion but by exclusion. And so can the more modern forms of 'Symbolic' Christianity, which like unitarianism seek to explain away as mere metaphor or symbol the fundamental and distinctive affirmations of Christianity which set it apart from all other forms of religion as a truly supernatural faith.

Among the things which the Koran further denies is the consistency of the doctrine of the Trinity with belief in genuine monotheism. In its obsession with the notion of the absolute and unqualified unity of God, Islam in general, and the Koran in particular, brand as polytheism any theological view which does not accord with their conception of God's unconditional uniqueness, the first article of the Muslim Credo as well as the sole condition of salvation.⁵ The Trinity is interpreted, perhaps owing to the influence of Nestorianism, as a plurality of Gods rather than a trinity of persons in one God, in short, as tritheism. The Virgin Mary figures in the Koran as the Third Person of the Trinity (5, 116)—a view which Muhammad might have picked up from some unlettered and misinformed Christian

⁵ At least with certain sections of theological opinion.

of Arabia.⁶ This is surprising in view of the concession which the Koran makes, presumably at an early stage, in favour of Christians and Jews (the Scriptuaries) who are placed on a footing of equality with the Muslims and are accordingly promised salvation in the life to come (3, 84 and 2, 62). What we are entitled to assume is that, in the course of time, the new faith encouraged by success became increasingly more intransigent in its attitude to Christianity which it finally decided to put outside the pale of genuine monotheism altogether.

Finally, the Koran denies the reality of Christ's crucifixion, which, following an early heretical Christian view,⁷ it describes as a mere deceptive panorama to which the witnesses of the crucifixion were subject (4, 157). Like the original exponents of this heresy, the Koran does this perhaps out of deference for Christ whom, it argues, 'was assumed to God'. But the Church has consistently refused to accept this gesture of false deference, because it struck at the very root of the Christian belief in the reality of our Lord's passion: the major episode in the drama of the Redemption. For if we deny the reality of Christ's suffering on the cross, his humiliation and death, we are equally driven to deny his triumph upon death. Thus the very foundations of our belief would be shaken and the historical genesis of the Church itself would be left unexplained. Was it not Christ's rising from the dead which gathered together the faint-hearted flock which his ordeal on the cross had dispersed?

The Koran, logically enough, could not concede the reality of Christ's crucifixion without conceding the fact of his resurrection and consequently his divine title. But it did the next best thing, relieved him of this ordeal and recognized his ascension to heaven, all through the power of God, however, not his own. In this manner it contrived to avoid the paradox inherent in admitting the crucifixion and the

⁶ However, a sect, the Collyridians, long extinct before Muhammad's time, are said by St Epiphanius to have adhered to this heresy which was 'diffused in Arabia, Thrace, and Upper Scythia'. (*Haeres* 3, 75 and 79.)

⁷ Basilides and others, reported by St Epiphanius, *op. cit.* 24, 3, and Irenaeus, *Contra Haeres*, I, 24.

ascension of Christ, while denying at the same time his divinity. But, be this as it may, the picture which the Koran paints of Christ is a beautiful picture indeed. This extraordinary Jesus, Son of Mary, speaks as a babe, heals the blind and the leprous, raises the dead and is ultimately assumed into heaven. Throughout he is fortified with the Holy Ghost and is miraculously shielded against the nefarious attacks of the Jews. Is not such a character truly divine? What more could God do if he had actually trodden the earthly scene? And what other privileges would he have enjoyed? Notwithstanding this exalted view of Christ, however, the Koran stops short of avowing his divinity. In subsequent generations, fascinated by this noble image of power, beauty and holiness, Muslim consciousness seized upon Christ as the supreme model of holiness—which remains, it is true, mere human holiness. Certain extreme sects even assigned to him the role of demiurge, the Creator of the terrestrial world, and the co-adjutant of God, as it were. But that is a later, and in fact, heterodox development, which has no basis in the Koran and which orthodox theology was accordingly quick to rule out as a blasphemous contention from a Muslim point of view.

EASTER STUDY WEEK - - 20-26 APRIL

MUSIC & RELIGION

Speakers and exponents include: Rosemary Hughes, Kathleen Long, Leonard Blake, Anthony Milner, Eric Taylor, George Malcolm, Kathleen Cooper, Yvonne Catterall, Hugh Dinwiddy, Mark Brocklehurst, O.P., Fr J. D. Crichton, O.P., etc.

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'FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES'

R. H. J. STEUART, S.J.

BY this shall all men know you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.' Such was our Lord's last exhortation to his disciples. He insists on mutual charity, love; because when we put that into practice it brings all the rest in its train. Charity is patient, kind, charity envieth not; it calls for forgiveness of trespasses, offences, debts. 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us' gives the Our Father a touch of meaning quite different from our ordinary language. To what do I commit myself when I say this? I acknowledge that I am a sinner: 'All we like sheep have gone astray'; like silly sheep. The gates are open, but do we go through them? No! We are stupid, silly sheep gone astray, just following our own way. In God's eyes we are all like sheep, more stupid than fierce; we are silly, selfish, naughty. The Lord is, however, my Shepherd, so I shall not want; I am always needing forgiveness, and I am getting it, but in the proportion in which I forgive others. How can I ask God to be kind and good to me, not to hold things against me, if I am not this to others?

'If you have love one for another.' This was our Lord's bidding, which was to be the distinguishing mark of his followers. If one does not follow it, or at least try to, one has no title beyond the mere mechanical one to call oneself the follower of Christ, and we know that without Christ we cannot be saved, let alone sanctified; he himself called it the New Commandment, namely, that we love our neighbour as ourself. Christ might have said 'by this shall all men know you are my disciples, if you are bold, intrepid, ready to attack error, living at a high level of prayer', and the rest of it; but he didn't. He said 'if ye have love one for another'. Christ gave a new authority, a new conception, to the law of charity. We judge the world of his day by that which was most representative of it, the Roman civilization; outside that men were lumped together as barbarians

and they did not count. St Paul uses strong language on the unnamable vices of the Romans, and he accuses them of being without affection, without mirth, without loyalty. Roman society was utterly devoid of the idea of human charity: because of the way they regarded human relationships, universal charity was quite impossible in their scheme. So this charity is a purely Christian thing—a new thing. When Christianity is neglected men become less kind, less forgiving to each other.

Well, then, every time I acknowledge I am a sinner before God I say, 'Forgive me, I am an offender, I have piled up a debt, I can only rely on your great mercy and ask you to forgive me, but I don't expect any more mercy from you than I have for other people in their sins against me.' Is not that almost a blasphemous thing to say when I think of this person and that and the other I dislike? I have said unkind things about them, or they are nothing to me, as zero; and then I wipe my lips and trudge off and say, 'Father, forgive me my trespasses as I forgive them'. I think one of the reasons why our prayers are not answered is that unless our prayers are in accord with the Lord's prayer they are not heard. Well, if I say 'Forgive us our trespasses' I have torpedoed it unless I am trying to forgive others.

Our Lord preached the Sermon on the Mount. If only that sermon could be broadcast all day—published in every weekly; instead of which we call it the Sermon on the Mount and leave it there. Well, among other things he talked about prayer and worship generally, and he said, 'You people, when you go to offer your sacrifice, if you remember there is somebody you hate, despise, are contemptuous of, at enmity with, don't offer that sacrifice—I shall forget you are there. Cast out from your heart all those feelings. Cast out hatred, contempt, dislike, hardness to everybody.' That is what our Lord said, and he was not talking to a lot of monks, nuns, or dons, but to the ordinary people. 'Don't pray if there is anything against charity in your heart, because your prayer will not be heard, your petitions will not be granted, your worship will not be accepted.' We are not machines, but human beings with

feelings, so it is not always possible to change the feelings, but at least we can will the good. The effort to try to maintain a high degree of charity to everybody is very pleasing to God.

Again, our Lord was describing the Judgment. He pictured it as a great Assize, and he said to the blessed, ‘You are welcome in heaven because you were kind to people, charitable to people’. For when they said, ‘When did we do it to you?’, he said, ‘When you did it to anybody you did it to me’. Then there is his picture of heaven and the lost. The Curé d’Ars used to work himself almost into a state of unconsciousness in horror at the thought of being cursed by God; by God, who is infinite love, who loves me. ‘Depart from me, ye cursed’—our Lord used those words. Why? What had they done? It was what they had not done. ‘I was hungry and you did not give me to eat; I was naked and you did not give me an old cast-off piece of clothing. If you had heard my word you would have known where to look for me, in my brethren.’ Notice the distinction: people were rewarded for doing good works—damned for not doing positive kind things. Our Lord did not accuse them of being positively cruel, or of harshness, but of not doing positively kind things. Could anything be more emphatic? There is no getting round it; those are the words of one who was able to say: ‘I and the Father are one’—‘Who sees me, sees the Father’.

Charity—the effort to maintain a high standard of kindness in thought, word and deed. Towards whom? Towards everybody; that is the crux. How can I have love for everybody? How can I love the enemies of my country? Does Christ impose such an impossible burden? Yes, that is the ideal—of loving our enemies who oppose us, do harm to us, take violent action against us. We *must* maintain this ideal; and we must be sorry that sometimes it cannot be literally carried out. If you are emptying a tommy-gun into someone you don’t say ‘You don’t know how I love you!’ Is the law of love, then, under certain circumstances, suspended? No; for while I must do everything I can to defeat my enemy, I can *pray* for him. Whatever course of action we have to take against our enemies, however we have to oppose,

defeat, even punish them, there always remains at least this, that we should pray for their good.

St Paul says, 'He that loveth his brother fulfilleth the law'. Our Lord didn't come to give us a doctrine that would make us all nice and happy materially; but he said, 'Seek first the Kingdom of God and his justice and all these things shall be added unto you'—all these things will fall into place. Yes, but the condition is, 'If you will follow me', and we haven't followed him, and we are not following him.

Wherever there is love there is God. The expression of love is the most important thing among us; wherever there is kindness, a giving of ourselves, an affectionate service, there is love, and wherever there is love in us there is God in us and we are showing God. It's my belief that no one can be in hell who, at the moment of his death, whatsoever sort of creature he had been, had in his heart love for somebody, because there is no love outside God.

The name of the devil is 'he in whom there is no love'. To be incapable of love—awful! That is why the devils hate God. They swoop down on us when we don't love one another, for then we are their disciples. There is no love outside God. It may even be a distorted love, but so far as it is *genuine* love it is a divine thing, and that was not recognized until Christ came to reveal it. It was only a disciple of Christ, looking through Christ's eyes, who was able to say, 'God is love'.

Practice of other virtues gives a great deal of trouble; it is very difficult to be humble; so with all the other virtues. But the genuine effort to be charitable has a peculiar attraction and sweetness of its own. Why? Because you are behaving in God's manner. The practice of charity gives us a clear vision, a sort of understanding of divine things.

Nothing facilitates prayer and puts it on the right lines and gives one strength to pursue it all the way, like the deliberate cultivation in our lives of universal charity; the effort to be charitable, to see something lovable in everybody—which there is. We are portrait painters, and we often see other people as we paint them, not as they are. The effort to love people is its own reward.

THE LAMB AND THE LION or THE GREEK PASSION

NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

THE psalmists were the singers of Israel; daily they magnified the name of the Lord, crying *Hosanna!*, *Hosanna!* . . . Today the crooner has become one of those psalmists. By means of the microphone, to a billion families and homes, he sends the same message—*I believe, I believe.* . . . His has become the voice of Sunday morning religion. His Nicene Creed is a short catalogue—a simple reverence of Nature's holiness, a worshipping of trees and stars and clouds, a palpitating delight in the first cries of newborn babes. Doubtless such sentiments are easy to ridicule;¹ they can be dismissed as clichéd or Pantheistic—or even if they are conceded to have a Christian note of optimism, then the Christianity which they celebrate may be considered rather wishy-washy. Nor is it hard for those who argue thus to add examples. They can instance 'The Book'—a current 'hit' on both sides of the Atlantic. 'There's a book': that book was given to the singer by his mother—no other; its leaves are edged with gold, its pages hold the wisdom of the ages. . . . Is that book the Bible? The answer remains anybody's guess because next Sunday a billion listeners must decide. . . . In 'The Bridge', another current song, the theme is more explicit: for those prepared to seek, redemption lies across 'the bridge'. The note of the negro 'spiritual' is apparent in this number, as it is also in the American number, 'What this Country Needs is a Good Old-Fashioned Talk with the Lord'. The same note of the 'spiritual' is apparent too in 'Answer Me, My Lord', which the English B.B.C. will only allow to be broadcast as 'Answer Me, My Love'.

This has been an excursion—a strange introduction perhaps to a novel about the Greek Orthodox Church. Yet this introduction (in a climate other than the Mediterranean) may

¹ See *Sunday Dispatch*, January 31st, 1954.

best give a hint of this book's breadth. For in *Christ Recrucified*² the author attempts nothing less than a contemporary portrait of Christ. His theme relates myth, history and present reality; in his vision hills become valleys, and Calvary and Hiroshima lie along the same plain.

A group of Greek peasants decide to stage a Passion Play. No sooner are their parts cast than they find their village confronted by a band of refugees. The elders shut their doors against them; so also does the local priest, Pope Grigoris. Like the early Christians, these refugees are forced to take shelter in the caves. ('These caves in the belly of our earth are our catacombs.') Meanwhile in the village those who have been selected to act in the Passion Play begin to doubt the wisdom of their elders; the more that they think about their roles, the more they side with those banished to the mountains. They begin to see in their own Pope Grigoris the figure of Anti-Christ, whereas in the priest of the refugees, Pope Fotis, they find an apostle. Gradually Manolios, who is to play Christ, becomes the village scapegoat; regarded as a fool by Pope Grigoris's followers, he becomes the friend of Pope Fotis. As the shadow of the Cross lengthens over their two lives, so does there grow within them a deeper realization of the folly of the Cross. Time is bridged and the meaning of redemption brought closer. It is a case of seeking, but to search is of no avail unless first one has been made pure of heart. They listen to the words of the psalmist. . . .

Seven years previously Manolios's part was played by Charalambis. Then the actor was infected with such religious mania that on Easter Day he had deserted his wife, left his children to beg, and sought sanctuary in a monastery. Now, as Manolios prepares for the part, he becomes infected with a form of facial elephantiasis; he still harbours thoughts of women and, as his lust mounts, so do the swellings in his cheeks. His body is the counter of his mind; both must be purified if they are to receive the true imprint of Christ. Charalambis had been too fanatical; Manolios has remained too tepid. He has to learn not to seek the divine countenance

² *Christ Recrucified*. By Nikos Kazantzakis. Translated by Jonathan Griffin. (Bruno Cassirer, 1954; 15s.)

in images. In passing he thinks of the iconostasis in the chapel, 'the long blue tunic', the 'bare feet which touched the ground so lightly that the blades of grass were not even bent'; the figure that was 'thin, transparent, weightless like a mist'. 'From His hands, from His feet and from His uncovered chest there flowed a thin thread of rose-pink blood.' Yet this is distant and pale portraiture, for ever since Holman Hunt painted *The Light of the World* this figure has grown paler. Repository art has furthered this mistiness; in the place of the virility of the early masters there has come effeminacy of feature; instead of blood, drops of rose-water have been substituted. For billions, Christ's portrait has been reproduced as anaemic and wishy-washy.³

This has been ill in the spreading of a living Christianity and in some small fashion it may account for why so many of the working classes have been lost to the Church—Greek Orthodox as well as Roman. For the question is this: how can a living, tough, muscular interpretation of Christ be matched with the living, tough, muscular figure of the Gospels?

Remember, the evangelists draw Christ the lion as well as Christ the shepherd. (Manolios is a shepherd who proves himself a lion.) Yet today all religious painting concentrates on Christ the shepherd. One of Kazantzakis's characters here makes the comment that if Christ returned today he would not carry a Cross on his shoulders, but a petrol-can. This is a double image, I submit. Petrol would burn the villagers of Anti-Christ out of their complacency as Christ in his own day whipped the money-lenders out of the Temple; and again as Christ was whipped on the way to Calvary; so were Christ alive now it is more than probable that he would not be crucified but burnt. Those who survived Hiroshima were forced to carry their burns like crosses. That might be one contemporary reading. Or another might be this. Remember that Christ was a Jew;

³ Last year I bought a crib. I chose a Dutch set because of the clear blues, reds and greens. The assistant seemed disappointed. 'It's not like our English conception', she said, pointing at a set whose angels were the colour of 'strawberry crush'. I was reminded of the bedroom suites of rich film stars.

remember the Reichstag Trials. . . . Or another. The indiscriminate use of petroleum hurts the sea; spawning grounds become barren, whole peoples starve.⁴ 'Believe me', as Pope Fotis says to Manolios, '[He] is not always as you carved him in the wood . . . kindly, easy, pacific, turning the other cheek when He receives a blow. He is also a resolute warrior, who advances followed by all the disinherited of the earth. "Think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Whose words are those? Christ's. Henceforward the face of our Christ is like that.' The pope's interpretation is simple—straight from the Gospels. He argues the principle of the just war and applies it to the fed and starving, to the villagers of Lycrovissi and his own hungry band of refugees. Remember, it may at times be good to be a sheep, but when a man is hemmed in by wolves, it is better for him to be a lion. God helps those who help themselves, declares the proverb. 'If you don't stir, God doesn't stir either', declares Pope Fotis. 'We've got to go down to the village and pinch what we can.' For this is a variation on the old story. As the Italian priest, Father Villari, commented in the last century: 'If the Church will not march with the working classes, not for that will the working classes stay their march'; and that is precisely what has happened to the Mediterranean society of which Kazantzakis is writing. Both the Roman and Greek Orthodox Churches have to win back their working classes.

Down in the Lycrovissi valley with its fertile plains, rich vineyards and peaceful prosperity the elders oppressed by a rich Church had robbed the peasantry and, in retaliation, the peasantry had given less and less of their tithes to the Church. Over the years this had become a tightening circle. Each for himself! The weakest to the wall! Religion can be stored for old age! When therefore the Turks had razed a neighbouring town to the ground and its refugees came begging hospitality, the elders of the village had conferred, finding in the possibility of plague a reason to bar their doors. They had forgotten that 'no man is an island entire of himself', that 'men must love one another or die'. 'Don't

⁴ See David Jones's work: *In Parenthesis* (1937) and *The Anathemata* (1953).

make distinctions between "yours" and "mine", Pope Fotis had warned Pope Grigoris. 'All the souls of the world are hung round a man's neck.' So the two popes had gone their different ways; the valleys and hills remained separate; Hiroshima and Calvary were not yet on the same plain. For so full of implications is this book that, like Thomas Mann's trilogy about Joseph and Jacob, it is not until a reader is more than half way that the three levels on which the novel is constructed become clear. The pages which one feels might be 'cut' in the first part prove essential to the second and third parts. Myth, history and the present all dovetail, forming a trinity that in the last chapter shows itself to have been indivisible from the beginning; and here perhaps is the place to raise an issue that comes more and more to the front as such phrases as 'the Catholic novel' fall into common usage.

Can one, for instance, speak of the apostolate of the novel as one speaks of the apostolate of medicine as part of the whole movement called the Lay Apostolate? Certainly there is a temptation to use such a new phrase, but one must be wary. In fiction the barrier between art and propaganda is wide, though there are times when it also seems perilously close. Novels can be written to order, but they are seldom works of art. How then can one say of a novel not written to order that it may yet form part of what tentatively may be called the apostolate of the novel? Is there not a contradiction in terms here?

Suppose an atheist were to find this novel. He remembers Athens before the first World War. He has heard Kazantzakis spoken of highly by friends. He believes that on several occasions the author has been in the running for the Nobel Prize. The translation seems to be extraordinarily good; the story appears an exciting one. Irrespective of Christ's divinity, this reader thinks of what works of art the Crucifixion has inspired. Whether the event was true or not, the story has all the qualities of a myth; the theme makes epics possible. A man giving his life for his beliefs, accepting his lot—these are noble virtues in any character. So the pages are flicked through. The book falls open at Chapter VII.

'The first of May. Summer is coming. In the still green

plain the corn is already turning to gold, the olives are knotting and growing, vines are adorning themselves with little acid clusters, a bitter milk flows in the green figs which will soon be all honey. The inhabitants . . . are eating garlic to keep themselves well—the whole village reeks of it. Old Patriarcheas is beginning once more to keep good cheer; he has become pot-bellied, his blood has thickened. The other morning Andonis the barber cupped him to save him from a stroke. Old Ladas too munches a sprig of garlic without thinking of it, while his spirit wanders between debit and credit: how much oil, wine, corn will he harvest this year? who owes him money, how much, and how is he to get it back? He thinks also of Yannakos's three pounds; he means to put his goods to auction and to get hold of his donkey.

'The betrothed languish. In May, no weddings; in June there is the work in the fields, no time for marriage-feasts. Then, the month after that, there is the threshing; the month after that, the wine harvest. They must wait till Holy Cross Day, in September, when there is less to do; when the harvest is being reckoned up. Then the pope will come and bless the new couples who, with many cares out of their way, will have plenty of bread and oil to eat, and wine to drink. That will give them the vigour to beget and bring forth children. . . .'

The hours slip by. The first chapter is read; then the second. The plot begins to unfold. In more than one sense Manolios comes to the front of the stage; he appears a fighter, and between reader and player there is immediate self-identification. The actor becomes a mirror—as indeed every man is a mirror of Christ. Time stands still. Greece can hardly have changed at all. The struggle between the elders and the peasants is exactly what it was before the '14-'18 war—indeed, exactly what it was when Christ drove the money-lenders from the Temple. History repeats itself and human nature does not change. The atheist feels his conscience eased. Other figures shadow Manolios—Robin Hood, Sir Percy Blakeney, Lawrence of Arabia. Fact and fiction mix with myth and reality. 'Manolios is a Bolshevik', shouts one of the villagers from Lycrovissi. 'Christ is the

first Communist' was once a well-worn Oxford tag; recently it has become more widespread. Christ as Raffles! The headmaster had been shocked; at Balliol the master had been less narrow-minded. But it was nearer the truth than Holman Hunt, nearer what the man might have been, nearer me. . . . There are vague stirrings, historic undertones and overtones. Christ the leader of the disinherited; Manolios the leader of the oppressed; myself?—myself the sympathizer with the underdog. For in seeking reflected glory the heart naturally looks to other brave hearts. Again, as bravery creates myths, and myths add to that bravery, so however directly a man may link himself to a Messiah-figure, so to that extent will he find in the link an element of truth because in actual fact he is using the link as a comparison with himself. This might be called the atheist's unknowing acceptance of the divine image in man. Hopkins understood this idea when he wrote his poem. 'The Soldier';

Mark Christ our King . . .

. . . [who] seeing somewhere some man do all that man
can do,

For love he leans forth, needs his neck must fall on, kiss,
And cry 'O Christ-done deed! So God-made-flesh does
too:

Were I come o'er again' cries Christ 'it should be this.'

Yet it must be added that this is not one of Hopkins' best short poems; nor is it over-clear. A gloss may be helpful. James Reeves⁵ has commented: 'Christ was a soldier. . . . When he sees a deed nobly done, he loves and praises the doer: we, formed in Christ's image, do likewise. If Christ were to come again, it would be in the likeness of a brave man.'

Christ Recrucified needs no such gloss. The contemporary portrait it presents is muscular, living and tough; it provides in its own vernacular a vital and full-blooded picture. There are no pastel shades, nothing wishy-washy. There is beef in the writing as there is beef in the words of the psalmists; and, when religion and religious painting have become so anaemic and pale, there is much to be said for beef. If Ernest

⁵ *Selected Poems*. By Gerard Manley Hopkins. Edited by James Reeves (1953).

Hemingway has described men and women as dumb oxen it is worth remembering that St Thomas Aquinas was also called an ox. The Scriptures are full of descriptions of men as strong as oxen; Christ's stable at Bethlehem was watched over by an ox. Yet the Scriptures and psalms—the whole Bible—hold faint memories in the conscious mind of the modern world. To a billion listeners every Sunday 'The Book' remains anybody's guess; and the network of broadcasting stations on both sides of the Atlantic are anxious to keep it this way. So one speaks again of the apostolate of the novel. For in its breadth *Christ Recrucified* links not only psalmist and crooner, but the psalmist's lament over Sodom with Christ's tears spilt over Jerusalem for Hiroshima.



POINTS OF VIEW

PEACE OR WAR

THE December issue of your periodical—a copy of which has recently come my way—is devoted almost entirely to the question of peace, and much emphasis is placed upon the theory that wars are the product of personal delinquencies; one after another your contributors return to the theme of individual strife and reiterate the familiar scholastic notion that peace is 'of the spirit'; there seems almost a contempt for regarding the term 'peace' as the mere absence of international slaughter. Yet it is in this latter sense that the word is normally understood in everyday conversation, in newspapers and in public utterances, and we are entitled to suppose that prayers in the Mass for 'peace in our days' and 'security from all disturbance' were, if not exclusively, at least primarily concerned with the 'mere' cessation or absence of wars. The elimination of international war may be held to be the most pressing of modern problems. In view of human imperfections, it is perhaps fortunate that the possibility of abolishing this curse is not dependent upon the supernatural inner peace stressed by your writers, as the

problem is political. Anyone who doubts this should consider the vast areas of Brazil, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. *within* which wars—of normal type—do not occur; religion has certainly not been the factor in this development.

JOHN NIBB

THE SCRIPTURES AND THE SPIRIT

I HAVE much appreciated your double number on the Scriptures and the Spirit, and it made me more than ever regret that I was unable to attend the LIFE OF THE SPIRIT Conference at Bishton Hall in September 1953. We all have at heart the fostering of a yet greater love of the Scriptures, knowing well that these 'were written that we might believe, and believing have life in his name'.

Let us note, however, that what we yearn for and need is a greater love of the Scriptures simply. Two points, I feel, should be urged: (a) the English word 'spiritual' is too often used in these contexts, equivocally; (b) in the minds of many, the literal sense of Scripture is something arid and jejune, compound of grammar and criticism, giving nothing of spiritual nourishment. Many commentaries on Scripture might give grounds for such a thought; we must pray, and look for, better commentaries: they do exist!

Yet if, as we should, we take 'literal' in the sense of 'literary' (as Fr Vincent McNabb used to say), then we are much nearer the truth. The Scriptures are a whole library, written in many varying literary styles. But, whatever the style (poetic, narrative, dramatic, proverbial, etc.), that which is expressed by the words and intended by the human author is the literal (or literary) sense. The words may be woven into plain prose narrative, or expressive of colourful, daring imagery, and so we have a plain literal (or literary) sense. It can hardly too much be emphasized that symbols, images, figured speech are not necessarily expressing anything more than the literal (or literary) sense of Scripture.

As some articles in the double number have admirably pointed out, we do need to know the vivid imagery, mind pictures and symbols of the biblical writers; we shall never understand the Scriptures sufficiently until we do—but (and

this must be added) having that understanding of the writer's language, symbols, etc., we shall have, for the most part, and in the first place, better equipment for the grasp of the literal (or literary) sense of Scripture. The typical, spiritual, mystical, 'real' (whatever we call it) sense is of another order. However, this is not the place for a treatise on the senses of Scripture; and there is no need for it, as the basic principles are succinctly and clearly set out by Fr Sebastian Bullough in his article on 'The Spiritual Sense of Scripture' (pp. 343-353).

The word 'spiritual' is the villain in all discussions of this sort. It may mean (i) spiritually nourishing. This is true of Scripture whenever read or interpreted in *any* legitimate sense. (ii) It may be used as a synonym for 'typical' or 'mystical' (the sense conveyed by the *res* in St Thomas's treatment).

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.



STUDIES IN THE LITURGY

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

HERE ARE four books,¹ published last year, all giving evidence of the considerable wave of deep study and interest in the history of the liturgy, which is characteristic of the present time. After the first pioneers like Abbot Guéranger and Dr Daniel Rock, we find modern studies taking a definite form about sixty years ago with the publication of Mgr Louis Duchesne's *Origines du Culte Chrétien*, first published in English under the title *Christian Worship* in 1903. This book is a landmark of its period. About the same time there was Edmund Bishop's *The Genius of the Roman Rite* (1902), followed by the work of Dom Cabrol, Dom Leclercq (the

¹ THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP. An Outline of Liturgical History. By Dom Benedict Steuart. (Longmans; 30s.)

L'ORDINAIRE DE LA MESSE. Texte critique, traduction et études. By Dom Bernard Botte, o.s.B., and Christine Mohrmann. (Cerf, Blackfriars.)

LE SACRIFICE DE LOUANGE. By Dom Jean Juglar, o.s.B. (Cerf, Blackfriars.)

HOLY MASS. Notes on the Liturgy. By Dom Eugene Vandeur. 5th and Revised Edition. (Burns Oates; 15s.)

big liturgical *Dictionnaire*) and Adrian Fortescue, until the discovery and publication by Dom Hugh Conolly in 1916 of the liturgical text of Hippolytus, which pushed back the concrete evidence to an earlier age than the great Sacramentaries. The large work of Dom Ildephonsus Schuster, begun in 1919, shows the subsequent development of studies, together with the beginning of the work of Dr Pius Parsch, the Augustinian. By 1930 Archdale King's *Notes on the Catholic Liturgies* became a standard work, making readily available the principal conclusions. It is only a few years since Archdale King developed and brought up to date his studies in his two volumes on the *Rites of Eastern and of Western Christendom*. During this time Dom Odo Casel, who died in 1952, was beginning his study of liturgical symbolism, with his *Mysteriengedächtnis der Messliturgie* in 1926. After the interruption of so much publication by the second world war, we find the two most complete works in the volumes of the Austrian Jesuit Andreas Jungmann, *Missarum Solemnia, eine genetische Erklärung der Römischen Messe* of 1948, and (especially for the earlier period of development) *The Shape of the Liturgy* by the Anglican monk Dom Gregory Dix in 1945.

It is rather important, when noticing books on the history of liturgy, to understand their place in modern studies. The important pamphlet (63 pages) by the German scholar Theodor Klauser, originally published in Germany in 1944, and in English as *The Western Liturgy and its History* is devoted precisely to the observation of developments since the time of Duchesne. New evidence is all the time coming to light, new interpretations of it are being tried, accepted or superseded.

Hence the importance of Dom Benedict Steuart's *Development of Christian Worship*, written after both Jungmann's 'genetic history' and Dix's study. He calls the book a 'text-book', and his object is simply to present and discuss the available evidence and offer a balanced interpretation. He does so admirably and most readably, and throughout with a delicate humility and deference towards the 'authors', perhaps especially noticeable towards Dix. Lest anyone should be misled by the title, it should be explained that the 'development' is studied up to the end of the period of the Sacramentaries, i.e. the eighth century and no further, since by that time all the older elements of the liturgy as we now know it had emerged. Medieval and subsequent modifications and accretions are not investigated. Since, however, it is with regard to the earlier (and in particular the earliest) period that recent studies have made the most notable advances, it is to cover this department of research that a book like this was especially needed. It is very attractively produced and well indexed, though the bibliography is awkwardly arranged by titles instead of authors and gives no dates of publication, which would be useful to the ordinary student in this branch of learning.

Dom Botte's *Ordinaire de la Messe* is a more specialized study. The full text of the Roman Mass, as it stands now (i.e., Pius V's Missal of 1570) is given, with the variants of the pre-Pian *editio princeps* of 1474 and the Curial Missal according to a MS of the thirteenth century and the edition of 1502. In other words, it is a study of the 'local' Roman Rite after it had achieved a fixed form, but before it became universal. Where there is evidence of antiquity traceable to Sacramentaries (sixth-eighth centuries), this is also noted. The text is printed (with translation opposite) in large type, with an apparatus criticus for variants below, and occasional notes. There are several valuable excursus on difficult formulae, including a history of the understanding of the words *Ite, missa est*, where the view that *missa* originally meant 'dismissal' is strongly argued. The book is handsomely produced.

Dom Juglar's title, *Sacrifice de Louange*, is equated with the word *Eucharist*, in the sense of a Sacrifice. The ancient formulae themselves, and the reflections of them in the writings of the Fathers as far as Augustine, particularly as regards the sacrificial aspect, occupies the first part of the book, while the second part goes through the text of the Mass, reviewing the same material as it were from the other end, finding the old formulae and teaching of Christian antiquity in the present-day text. Thus, when speaking of the preparatory prayers, it is noted that they are later, private prayers of the priest, and not public prayers, whence the author commends the (rare enough) practice of *not* reciting them chorally at a dialogue Mass (p. 165 n.).

Dom Vandeur's book belongs originally to an earlier period. It first appeared in 1911 as *The Holy Mass Popularly Explained*, but the French edition was extensively revised at Maredsous in 1946, and this new English edition is based on that. The book has long been a well-trying favourite and provides a wealth of historical fact and detail: the whole text of the Mass, with the accompanying actions, is studied in order as it now stands, and simple popular historical explanations are provided, interspersed with occasional remarks on the deeper significance of the words. Intricate historical questions are not pursued, though matters such as the *fermentum* are not omitted. The introduction is an appeal for a deeper understanding of the Mass and a conscious participation in its mysteries, and this was indeed pioneer work in 1911, but we cannot say that such preaching is no longer needed, even though it has become so familiar. The lay-out, the printing (Irish), and the paper are a little inelegant, and the translation is sometimes clumsy or unctuous, but these do not prevent the book from being a mine of information or impede our gratitude to the publishers for making it available to us in its revised form.

REVIEWS

THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA OF MYSTICISM. By Herbert Thurston, S.J.
(Burns Oates; 35s.)

The literary executors in the Society of Jesus of the late Herbert Thurston are performing a valuable service to the learned world in editing and reissuing in book form his papers. They have themselves conceded that one of his faults as a scholar was his preference for dealing summarily with his findings in short articles, instead of husbanding them for the major critical works which he could so well have written. The many editors whose journals month by month were enriched by his commentaries must bear their share of responsibility for this. From their publications and from other sources Fr J. H. Crehan, S.J., has gathered a great series of essays dealing with one of his major interests, *The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism*. Here Thurston is displayed to better advantage than in some of his excursions into near-liturgical history; and though this volume must necessarily show a certain lack of connection, it is unified and animated by its revelation of the mind and temper of its author. Few offices are more misunderstood than that of the *promotor fidei*: to the pious he is a perverse and wilful sceptic, to the sceptic the chief actor in a travesty of the processes of law. To those who really wish to understand the spirit in which the *promotor* must come to his task, no better guide than this book could be recommended.

Thurston was probably not by nature a hero-worshipper, but plainly he felt love as well as respect for the personality of Prosper Lambertini, greatest of all the *promotores*, who as Benedict XIII imposed order upon the practice of the Church in canonization, and made to shine afresh the principles of law and veracity which had from early times been honoured in that practice. If Lambertini had seen the evidence and had been convinced by it, that was good enough for Thurston; and in many of his pronouncements and asides we can hear the voices, clear, cool, dry, of his many precursors in the trade of taking nothing upon trust. 'Without disputing the possibility, and even the likelihood, of subsequent interpolations in such a work, I must confess myself frankly distrustful of all attempts to reconstruct the primitive text.' 'Naturally in such a case it is the medical evidence which is of most importance.' 'What I have hesitated to accept is not the fact, but the inference that the fact is miraculous.' As all crime-reporters and character-actors know, there is something irresistibly comic in the spectacle of the trained, dispassionate judicial mind on the hunt (often over unpromising country) for truth; and Thurston on Levitation, Thurston on Human Salamanders, *inter alia*, are first-rate entertainment.

But a judge, if he is not to be hated and feared, must be able to be

moved by pity and compassion; how good a judge Thurston would have been is best shown by the long essay, 'The Case of Mollie Fancher', an account of the life of a Protestant Brooklyn girl of the last century, constantly afflicted by the most cruel physical and mental sufferings, and displaying gifts which, to those who believed in her, could only be of supernatural origin. Without for one moment departing from his most severe standards of judgment, Thurston in this essay tells a most moving story, such as can hardly fail to edify his readers, of the fortitude and humility of this grievously-tried woman, of her refusal to be made an object of curiosity, above all of her unshaken trust in God. Her case provides most valuable evidence for one of his main theses, that the physical phenomena which we associate with the attested miracles of some of the greatest ecstatic saints can be produced by merely psycho-physical causes, notably in hysteric patients; yet for him Mollie Fancher is still not a complex of symptoms to be articulated and indexed, but a gallant, fighting soul.

He has the omniscience of the traditional judge, and his traditional belief that this knowledge is common. To him the obscurer Latin documents in forgotten causes are 'relatively easy of access', because diligent search in the vast resources of the British Museum had led him to them: yet even Thurston has occasion to lament that the documents concerning many canonizations are either unedited, or, worse, relayed to us in pious works written by those for whom the rules of evidence do not exist. How much it is to be regretted that no society exists to undertake for the surviving records of processes what the Bollandists have done in other branches of hagiography, and that still only the enthusiasm of individual scholars has produced such editions. If the work of the great Swedish medievalist Isak Collijn in editing the processes for St Bridget and St Catherine of Sweden, for example, were to be emulated in other countries, how greatly would all historians profit from such labours.

Thurston's own immense reading led him into fields where much was to be gathered. One of the most fascinating chapters of this book is 'Stigmata before St Francis', and is an account of the extraordinary apparition in England in 1222, at a time when most of us think of this country as free from such wild extravagances, of a pseudo-Christ and a pseudo-Mary. All Thurston's conclusions on this affair are marked with sobriety and restraint; it is now for others to relate his observations to their own upon such matters.

At times he stops disappointingly short of what one might expect him to say. One cannot but regret that his absorbing analysis of 'the odour of sanctity' did not lead him to a presentation of some of the evidence for the complementary phenomenon, with which he must have been perfectly familiar, the stench of sinfulness; and although his presentation of the

case of the thirteenth-century hysteric-ecstatic Elizabeth of Herkenrode is valuable (especially when, later in this book, we observe its similarities to that of Teresa Higginson), it is already well reported, and one might have hoped from him for a deeper consideration of some of its peculiar features.

But one must not be ungrateful. No one knew better than he how to strip a topic of its alluring irrelevancies, to refuse to be diverted by minor issues, to find out facts and pronounce upon nothing but them. Another reviewer, writing recently of him, has reminded us of the dictum, 'C'est toujours le devoir des pieux de ne pas scandaliser les savants'. In this work Thurston has drawn for us a comforting portrait of himself as the savant who is unshockable in his learning, unwavering in his piety.

ERIC COLLEDGE

PROGRESS IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE. By Bernard J. Kelly, C.S.SP., D.D. (Clonmore and Reynolds; 9s. 6d.)

The author of this book is one of the Holy Ghost Fathers. It is so patently written under the inspiration of the Spirit, that this reviewer has no choice but to allow him to speak for himself, by devoting her allotted space to a series of extracts which will summarise the theme of the whole.

'If we but judge according to the idea of religious and the religious life which exists in the mind of God, the normal thing is that religious should make progress with their years of profession, and that, granted the graces which God offers to those whom he favours with a religious vocation, *it is, in a very true sense, easier to make progress than not to make it*'. (p. 9.) (All the italics in this review are ours.)

'Many people have a false idea of holiness, and consequently a false notion of what it means to advance in it.' (p. 10.)

'To understand how it is that greater holiness is always possible for the religious, it is necessary to consider first of all that *the religious vocation is a call to growth in perfection, and that this call persists all the years of a person's religious life*.' (p. 11.)

'At no time of his life does God demand of a religious that he should be perfect. On the contrary, by the very fact of calling him to *strive after perfection*, God declares most unequivocally that he knows that the religious has not perfection as yet, *and will be imperfect right up to the end*. The one essential thing God asks of a religious is that he *strive, that he try*. A good religious, a successful religious, a religious after God's own heart, is one who is imperfect and is trying to become less so. *The only kind of imperfection which meets with God's disapproval, is that of the religious who is imperfect and who is satisfied to remain imperfect*.' (p. 12.)

'We need never fear our failures: for the religious, as for the Christian,

danger lies in success. Provided that as mature religious we have the humility to keep on struggling at what looks to us very like the beginnings of religious life, there is no doubt that we are making progress and very great progress indeed.' (p. 19.)

All these quotations are taken from the first chapter. Those who whom this book is intended will need no further encouragement to buy it and finish it for themselves. Fr Kelly has addressed himself primarily to active religious who are also priests, but almost everything he has to say can be applied to all religious without exception. It can also be made their own by all those lay-folk who are eager to grow in the love of God, and who are humble enough to accept and bow to the fact that the religious life must *always* remain the 'school of perfection and of the Lord's service'. But enrolled there as day-scholars, as all God's children must needs be, this book will be their *vade mecum*, a sure and safe guide leading them even to the end of the journey and the topmost peaks of the mountain and the hill. To which may God, in his loving-kindness, bring each one of us.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

ESQUISSES DU MYSTERE DE L'EGLISE. By Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P. Cerf; Collection Unam Sanctam 8; n.p.)

Since this is a re-edition of a book first published in 1940, a reviewer may be content with some general remarks, entirely of welcome. There is this difference, that the original two appendical chapters written for the Möhler centenary in 1938 have been replaced by a more recent study: *Le Saint-Esprit et le Corps apostolique, réalisateurs de l'œuvre du Christ*. The other four essays are entitled: *L'Eglise et son unité*, *L'idée de l'Eglise chez saint-Thomas d'Aquin*, *Le Corps Mystique du Christ*, *Vie de l'Eglise et conscience de la Catholicité*. All were written for different purposes in the first place but combine excellently in a single volume, in which the Thomist idea of the Church can be taken as basic. No one well acquainted with the *Ila* and *Illa Pars* of the *Summa* will find anything materially new here; the originality consists in re-thinking St Thomas's treatment of the Return to God as an ecclesiology. To do so is, of course, to escape from that welter of apologetic treatises that has been assembled in the last four hundred years to meet special needs of this and that day, and which confronts the dismayed student in so many text-books. These treatises have their place, indeed, but it is not usually the place of the occasional to structuralise the permanent, and since the Church is as permanent as any visible feature of Christianity—*quia haec Ecclesia incoepit a tempore Abel et durabit usque ad finem seculi*, in the words of St Thomas,—therefore a properly proportioned theology of the Church must be most closely linked to the fundamental and essential feature of Christian life. Père Congar's

eaders, may they be many, will at the start wonder where is the church of their weekly experience, the church of rubrics, of pre-nuptial enquiries, of so many and sometimes so complicated disciplinary laws, but they will find it in the end, and after seeing the foundations properly laid, will understand its purpose and necessity better.

For ourselves it is many years since we have read anything at all so invigorating on this subject, and never anything that goes deeper and preserves so thoroughly a Thomist course of statement.

Ivo THOMAS, O.P.

LE CANTIQUE DES CANTIQUES. Nouvelle traduction par André Chouraqui; introduction et notes du R.P. Lucie-Marie de St Joseph, O.C.D. (Desclée de Brouwer; n.p.)

It was a good idea of the publishers' to produce in such an attractive format André Chouraqui's French translation of the Song of Songs. There is no better version than this, for it effects the rare achievement of uniting fidelity and poetry, and here even poetry is reached through fidelity. Evidently such a union presupposes a knowledge of Hebrew and of French capable of fusing the genius proper to each language at the source. It demands also an understanding of the mystery of Israel and of her divine election. Some of the obscurities of the French translation are in fact the obscurities of the Hebrew. The reader cannot regret these difficult passages, particularly as the editors have happily added some judicious notes from the pen of Père Robert de la Vierge, O.C.D., as a discreet appendix to the volume, to elucidate some of the more difficult expressions in the text. In this way the text itself loses nothing of its poetic rhythm and its music. As to the Introduction by Père Lucien-Marie de St Joseph, it must be admitted that these learned pages written by so erudite an exegete bring great refreshment. For they help the reader to discover the meaning of the inspired book according to the intention of the Spirit who has thus enriched the treasures of Israel, an intention which is revealed in the hearts of those who return to and still live deeply in spirit the mysterious life of Israel, the Church, the Spouse of Christ.

JEAN DE LA CROIX KÄELIN, O.P.

THE WORD. A Meditation on the Prologue to St John's Gospel. By Adrienne von Speyr. (Collins; 10s. 6d.)

Here is a book which must have been very difficult to translate. I say this not so much because the book often makes turgid reading, but rather to point to the fundamental obstacle to understanding which the reader will have to contend with right from the start, the obstacle that this is a private work. We are given a meditation on the prologue to St John's Gospel, as the title-page claims, but it is an unedited meditation recollected with what

must be unusual faithfulness, for it bears all the marks of the meditation which any one of the author's readers might make for himself: now spontaneous, now contrived, as when a pattern, for example of the Trinity, is seen stamped on so many situations, both natural and supernatural, and with a clarity which seems almost to belong to private revelation. Again, any one of us might see similes, might make unqualified statements, statements so bald in their affirmations as to be almost scriptural, which would not explain or require explanation, for we should make them to ourselves; the association of ideas would be habitual, *we* should understand what was meant, but it is at least problematical whether anyone else would.

With such a book, to ask whether a given statement is true or false seems to be asking the wrong question, or at least one would need to know the author intimately to be able to give an answer; as it is, one must just participate when one can, and leave the rest for someone else. That such participation is possible, and at many different levels, is claimed by the translator in his introduction, and there is at least one level, that of human relationship, where a mind not set in the same key as the author's may make contact with her. Here the thought and the language are very like Martin Buber's; here the private view is, so to say, thrown open, and one may see that this is, after all, a book written for love. 'Love must allow others to be others; it must accept the proximity of other circles, in which others are related, not to it primarily, but to God. It is only by letting others alone and leaving things to God that one learns that the neighbour one does not know belongs to God, and then the light of real helpfulness and true community become possible. It is only when we set our neighbour free, when we recognise and respect his darkness because it is open to the mystery of God, that our reciprocal strangeness is endurable.' (p. 63.)

G.B.

THE GIFT OF GOD. A Study of Sanctifying Grace in the New Testament.
By John Morson, O.C.R. (Mercier Press; 12s. 6d.)

In the Rule of St Benedict there is a period each day given to *lectio divina*, or sacred reading, that is the meditative study of the Scriptures. This book is the product of such meditative reading and it needs to be approached in the same spirit. The author makes use of the Westminster Version of the New Testament, which is closest to the original Greek, and he keeps his eye constantly on the Greek text, so that it is a work of real scholarship. But it does not require any knowledge of Greek in the reader as the Greek words are always transliterated and their meaning carefully explained. At the same time it is a work of sound biblical theology. There is no attempt to read later meanings into words, but a deliberate effort to catch their exact meaning and so to trace the gradual development of doctrine. The books of the New Testament are studied in their chrono-

logical order, so that the Gospel of St John comes last, and a brief account is given of the date and authorship of each book. Fr Morson relies chiefly on Catholic authorities, but an interesting use is made of Westcott's *St Paul and Justification* and still more of Newman's *Lectures on Justification*, written when he was an Anglican. The whole book is marked by careful scholarship and sincere thought, though there are inevitably points upon which one would be inclined to disagree with his interpretation. Above all one would quarrel with his interpretation of the works of the Law in St Paul, when contrasted with grace, as applying merely to the ceremonial Law. This seems to be an over-simplification of St Paul's thought, which loses much of its significance. But on the whole it is a book which can be recommended to anyone who wants to make a serious study of the doctrine of the New Testament in the light of the original and who is prepared for the labour of quiet meditative study which it entails.

BEDE GRIFFITHS, O.S.B.

DIE SEELENREISE. By Alfons Rosenburg. (Verlag Otto Walter, 1952.)

ESSAI SUR L'EXPERIENCE DE LA MORT, suivi du, PROBLEME DU SUICIDE.

By Paul-Louis Landsberg. (Editions du Seuil.) Translated by Cynthia Rowland; with a foreword by Martin Jarrett-Kerr, C.R. (Rockcliff; 8s. 6d.)

Not long ago a student told me she believed that the human person is annihilated at death; the reason she gave was that she 'could not imagine what it would be like, otherwise'. When communities had a livelier sense of the supernatural this was no difficulty—they had rather to be restrained from too vivid an exercise of their imaginations. Perhaps Alfons Rosenburg's book will stimulate someone to throw up some convincing images to help my student-friend in her dilemma. His work contains brief accounts of the soul's journey after death as envisioned by pagans, Jews, the Gospels, Dante, and various modern seers, Thomas Bromley, Oberlin, Anna Katharina Emmerich, Goethe, etc. Accompanied by several striking illustrations, this volume is full of interesting information and sidelights on the people whose thought it discusses.

A person who really faced up to the mystery of death—indeed, he thought it to be fundamentally *the* philosophical problem—was Paul-Louis Landsberg. A pupil of Max Scheler, and a Catholic, Landsberg was driven out of Germany by the Nazis. In France he used to carry poison around with him so as to be able to kill himself if ever the Gestapo captured him. The Gestapo did capture him, and he eventually died on April 2nd, 1944. But some two years before this date he had already overcome the temptation to commit suicide, and had thrown away the poison. As he told a friend, 'I have *met* the Christ, who has revealed himself to me'. And as he tells his readers, 'You must not kill yourself, because you must not *throw your*

cross away. You need it. And ask yourself in your conscience if you are really innocent. You will find that even though you are innocent in the eyes of the world you are guilty in a thousand other ways.' This quotation is typical of the profound penetration encountered on every page of this moving posthumous publication.

DONALD NICHOLL

PSYCHOLOGIE MODERNE ET REFLEXION CHRETIENNE (No. 3 in the Collection, Recherches et Débats, Librairie Arthème Fayard, Paris; 11s. 6d.)

The third in this important new series of studies dealing with contemporary problems is devoted to psychology, and its quality will be evident from the list of contributors: Charles Baudouin, Joseph Nuttin, Louis Bernaer are but three of the twenty distinguished contributors. Taken together they present a comprehensive survey of present-day psychology. As such, the volume can be recommended to anyone interested in these matters, but such a recommendation alone would not do justice to the value and originality of many of its pages. Joseph Nuttin, for example, gives a masterly sketch of how the *pathological* investigations of Freud can be made to serve an integrated psychology of the *normal*; educators who have been troubled at the seeming irrelevance of certain Freudian theses will be most grateful for this positive interpretation of human development. And one imagines that directors will be equally grateful to Père Oraison for his essay on the psychological maturity that is essential before a vocation can be truly taken up; he diagnoses the many forms of infantilism that have to be shed before a healthy vocational life is possible. And how helpful is the observation that sex only occupies the centre of a person's attention when some sexual problem has not been properly dealt with: 'Just as one vehicle which has skidded aslant the road holds up the traffic and attracts the attention of an excited crowd, so the sexual instinct which goes off the rails, and is not integrated, will wrongly become the focus of attention.' But perhaps the most remarkable contribution comes from Nodet, on the 'morality' demanded by the new psychology; the degree of selflessness and courage required if one is to know oneself as psychoanalysis reveals oneself is almost terrifying—in the same way as St John of the Cross is terrifying. It is also the measure of our sincerity in loving—in *in caritate non ficta*.

DONALD NICHOLL

JESUS MASTER AND LORD. A Study in the Historical Truth of the Gospels. By H. E. W. Turner. (Mowbray; 21s.)

This orderly and comprehensive book, by an Anglican scholar of repute, furnishes a useful survey of much present-day critical thought concerning

the Person of our Lord, and the Gospels, and might be read as a general introduction to the subject. Many clear explanations, as of the different kinds of criticisms, are included. The author has divided his work into five Parts, and in the first deals with the sources: those outside the New Testament, and those within it. In Part II, he discusses the Gospels historically, and gives an outline Life of Christ. In Part III, of four chapters, he expands the treatment of the Person of Christ, viewing him respectively as Teacher and Prophet, Wonderworker, Messiah, and Son of the Father. Each of these chapters holds much material for thought: in the first, Christ's teaching is compared with that of the Rabbis, and it is shown that despite many surface resemblances there are differences that lie deeper. Here, too, the poetic form of our Lord's utterances is stressed, the author drawing from it a further argument for the strict historicity of the Gospel record. Part IV is devoted to our Lord's teaching in detail, and the concluding part is a single chapter on the Resurrection, in which Professor Turner summarises and effectively rebuts the chief naturalistic theories that have been offered to account for it. Catholics will not of course always share the author's standpoint, or grant all his assumptions, and now and then differences make themselves sharply felt, as when in chapter X he minimises the significance of the Petrine texts. Generally however, as we have perhaps indicated, we think he is sound as well as learned, and his views are at times in refreshing contrast to theories he expounds, in some of which disregard of tradition—the basic defect of so much Higher Criticism—is strongly evident. Read with due discrimination, the book seems to us first-rate for stimulating an intelligent interest in the Gospels.

M.H.

MANY who heard Fr Peyton preaching his Rosary Crusade remarked that he had not very much to say but that his personality preached. In *THE EAR OF GOD* by Fr Peyton (Burns Oates, 5s.) we have to rely on what he has to say, and we find that after all his words too have substance. He tells in the third person the story of his crusade enshrined in general themes on faith, prayer, the family, etc. He quotes widely from Jung, Moore, Darwin and many others; yet, as we would expect, his writing is not 'high-brow'. Here and there a gleam of the Irish wit that characterized Fr Vincent McNabb appears to suggest that with pruning and practice his preaching could develop the pithiness of that other great Irish apostle.

C.P.

OF CLEAVING TO GOD, the spiritual gem formally attributed to St Albert the Great, has been revised and republished in the English translation of Dr E. Stopp by Mowbrays at 2s. 6d.

THE REFORMATION OF THE XVI CENTURY. By Roland H. Bainton.
(Hodder and Stoughton; 20s.)

Mr Roland Bainton, who has recently given us a life of Martin Luther, has now written a general work on the Reformation. Such a book is needed; if for England the period is, on the whole, well covered, for the Continent one must have recourse to large specialized works which are not always convenient for schools. Unfortunately one cannot recommend Mr Bainton's book to teachers and those responsible for stocking school libraries. One would like to; the book gives an excellent outline view of the period. The introduction and the last three chapters are particularly interesting and stimulating. But the book has here and there statements which are either wrong or else made with an assurance which hides from the inexperienced their extreme discountability. Nor are we given any authority for a number of remarkable revelations.

When, for example, did the Papacy make an alliance with the Turk? (p. 4). 'The Papacy went bankrupt and in consequence was transferred from Rome to Avignon' (p. 12) is a new way of looking at things. The explanation of the doctrine of indulgences (p. 13) is hardly satisfactory. What *does* 'whose sins were in arrears' mean? Less rhetoric (there is a remarkable passage on page 26) and more exact quotation in the chapters on Luther would have saved us from the remarkable definition of contrition and attrition on page 30. The Capuchins are airily defamed on page 137; has Mr Bainton never read the works of Father Cuthbert, O.F.M.CAP., on the subject? Cardinal Contarini receives most cavalier treatment (pp. 137 and 152); some nuances are allowed, surely, even in a popular work? Wycliffe, we may say in passing, was condemned by a *Roman* pope, Gregory XI (the first for many years) and then by the Council of Constance (cf. p. 185). To say (p. 187) baldly and without citing any authorities that Pope Clement VII suggested 'bigamy as preferable' [to divorce] is intolerable. It is most probable that Wolsey was responsible for the story. To ascribe such sentiments to Cardinal Cajetan (p. 259), again without reference, is ludicrous. Nor is annulment a practical equivalent to divorce among Catholics (id.). What 'principle of mental reservation' covered Cranmer's perjury at his consecration? (p. 191). *Was* the Pope cognizant of his (Cranmer's) views? Was Cranmer himself?

One does not like to have to indulge in this sort of fault-finding, especially as the book marks a tremendous advance on the traditional Protestant history of the Reformation. Nevertheless, in a book so attractively presented and destined to be of great interest to the general public it is regrettable that these blemishes should be found. It is to be hoped that future editions will carry some slight modifications.

RICHARD BLUNDELL, S.J.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN YEAR. By A. Allan McArthur, B.D., PH.D. (S.C.M. Press; 15s.)

The 'purging of the temple' carried out in Scotland after 1560 was a much more drastic and comprehensive business than the somewhat superficial 'spring-cleaning' which preceded it in England. For the leaders of the Reform Party ordered not only the 'utter suppression of idolatry, with all monuments of the same': they went further than any of their brethren on the continent of Europe, and overthrew the whole structure of the Christian Year. The Lord's Supper was not to be administered more than four times a year, and on no account on or around Christmas or Easter, lest Popish superstition should be kept alive. For three centuries there was no official recognition of the traditional liturgical year among Presbyterians. Then, very gradually, Christmas and Easter began to be observed here and there. Now, at long last, there is an increasing body of ministers and layfolk in the Established Kirk who feel that it is high time to compile a Kalendar which should include, if nothing else, Christmas, Epiphany, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost. Within the past fifty years more and more churches in Scotland have ventured to mark these foundations of the liturgical year, often with an 'observance' of the Lord's Supper, but the custom is by no means universal. Unless we are mistaken, in only one of the 1,470 churches in Scotland is the Lord's Supper administered weekly.

So it is good to find the Minister of Peterhead setting forth, with masterly liturgical scholarship, the reasons why the more primitive structure of the Christian Year ought to be restored to the Established Kirk, and be given official recognition. He has no desire to take over the Anglican form of the Christian Year as found in the Kalendar of the Book of Common Prayer. 'Our gratitude to the Church of England for the preservation of the precious gift of the Christian Year through the centuries of our neglect does not mean that we can regard the authority of the sixteenth century as being adequate for our purpose. . . . As we restore the architecture of the liturgical year we must ask serious questions regarding the shape and fashion of the structure. Nothing can be taken for granted.' Mr McArthur, to judge from the authorities he quotes, seems to know far more about the latest Catholic liturgical sources of reference than many a Catholic who happens to be liturgically-minded.

One thing is certain: the builders of Peterhead Old Parish Church, that windswept red granite classical kirk on the most easterly point of Scotland, never guessed that more than a century and a half later, its minister would publish a book which, except for a few unimportant details, might easily have been written by a Catholic priest! *The Evolution of the Christian Year* is a solid contribution to the right sort of ecumenism.

PETER F. ANSON

NOTICES

HUBERT NORTHCOTE, C.R., in *MAN, GOD AND PRAYER* (S.P.C.K., 9s. 6d.) has set out to provide a simpler book of introduction to prayer a kind of preface to his larger and more detailed work *The Venture of Prayer*. He writes for Anglicans primarily, but working as he does in Sekhukhuniland he has an eye for the mission field and attempts to de-westernize the teaching to a certain extent. But, as we already know from his previous work, his sources are mainly Catholic mystical writings, so that he does not fall into the mystical universalism which characterizes so much similar work today. His final chapter on *Contemplative Prayer* is eminently practical.

Two handsomely produced books both give the thought and prayer of earlier times in a truly modern garb: John Searle's metrical translations or adaptations of St Augustine, some of which are familiar to readers of *THE LIFE*, are now available in permanent form—*VERSES FROM ST AUGUSTINE or SPECIMENS FROM A RICH MINE* (Oxford University Press, 6s.). The author adds a preface to explain his method. Not only does he give us the spirit of some of St Augustine's pithiest sentences, but he also leads the way to a method of meditating on the treasures of that 'rich mine'. The Dean of York, Dr E. Milner White, finds himself of sufficient age to put forth a prayer-book of his own private devotions, many of which come from the Scriptures or the *Imitation* or similar works. But they are all assimilated by the Dean and made attractive and of use as a method of making earlier writings our own today. Here and there we find a rather one-sided view, as when he begins his prayer for Lent, 'Lord, let me fast most truly and profitably by feeding in prayer on thy Spirit'. But much of it could make suitable meditation also for a Catholic (*MY GOD AND MY GLORY*: S.P.C.K., 10s. 6d.). It is a pleasure to find such excellent book production comparatively cheap; both books are delightful to handle and use.

When *THE FREEDOM OF DOUBT* by E.-A. Preyre (Harvill, 18s.) first appeared in the original French it received great praise from reviewers in *The Times Literary Supplement*, *Réforme*, etc., as the testimony of a man who had reached some sort of faith after twenty years of unflinching doubt. Without questioning the truth of this appraisal, one might well ask whether all this doubting was necessary; M. Preyre's book is sub-titled 'Reflections of a Natural Sceptic', but the scepticism seems more properly attributable to French education à la Descartes than to nature.

FOR several years now, Paul Tournier has been in the van of the movement for 'personalist' medicine, a medicine in which the doctor not only seeks to analyse the causes of a disease but tries also to understand the meaning of the disease to the patient. A doctor, in Tournier's opinion, should not only prevent people from dying but also help them to live. In order to do this Tournier searches the Scriptures—so as to be more open towards the meaning of illness and death. The results of his searches are to be found in *A DOCTOR'S CASEBOOK IN THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE* (S.C.M. Press, 16s.).

NIELS STENSON, the seventeenth-century Danish geologist and convert to the Faith, is attracting the devotion of Catholic scientists who wish to see him canonized. One of the conditions for canonization being *fama sanctitatis*, Gustav Scherz (who edited Stenson's letters) has written a short pamphlet to show that Stenson has constantly enjoyed this *fama sanctitatis*: *IM RUFE DER HEILIGKEIT* (Herder, Freiburg).

EXTRACTS

THE Dominicans of the German Province are opening a Conference and Study House next door to their Provincial House of Studies—it is called Walberberger Institut. The Father Director, in a letter to the Editor, has outlined one of his courses which will be of special interest to English and American readers: 'My idea is that we are arranging here at Walberberg a course of lectures of about 10-14 days for English Catholics (or non-Catholics if they are interested in œcumenical work). This course of lectures is meant to give those attending an idea of the life of the Church in Western Germany. I am not thinking of one of the usual sort of rallies for "international understanding" at which, as experience shows, very little is achieved as regards the purpose of the meetings. No, the idea is to admit only English-speaking people and to give them introductory talks on Catholic life in Western Germany. Perhaps there will be many English Catholics who, as in past years, would like to spend their holidays in Western Germany. At the end of their holidays (or, better still, at the beginning) I should like to invite them to come to Walberberg in order to give them the opportunity to obtain first-hand knowledge of every aspect, so far as this is possible on such an occasion, of Catholic life in Western Germany. If I speak of the life of the Church in Germany then I mean it in a wide sense, so that one could include talks on the social question, on the Liturgy, cultural task of the Church among other topics. Walberberg being situated in the vicinity of Köln and Bonn and the industrial parts of Germany (the Ruhr region) with a very active

Catholic population seems to be particularly suited for this purpose. Besides the introductory talks and discussions there could be many excursions, visiting of factories and the various forms of Celebration of the Liturgy (with the congregation taking part in the Liturgy as we like it in Germany) and other activities. There would still be a sufficient amount of time for recreation, etc. As regards the expenses, we could try to keep them low, so that there would be almost no expense besides the fare and the fee for food and lodging.'

Those interested in this scheme should write to:

Der Direktor,
Walberberger Institut,
Dominikanerkonvent,
Walberberg, Kr. Bonn,
Germany.

IN THE January number of *Tijdschrift voor Geestelijk Leven*, there appears the results of a questionnaire on the utility of the journal. The editors were very pleased with the results and were able to say that 'it is clear to all our readers that the *Tijdschrift* is a periodical dealing only with matters concerning the spiritual life, and not with anything else'. Upon examination it was found that during the past years more than fifty per cent of the articles concerned religious, and, upon suggestions made, the editors promise to give more space to the spiritual life as concerning lay people and secular priests.

This intention seems to have been carried out immediately in the January issue. The first article—an excellent one—deals with the relation between the natural and the supernatural lives, or, in the words of the author, 'how it is that grace is a sanctifying, that is, a "hallowing", grace.'

THE DECISION regarding the priest-workers in France was ably defended by the Archbishop of Aix in his *Lettre Circulaire* to his clergy, dated 11 February. In it he makes it clear that the concern of the Pope and Hierarchy was to preserve the spiritual vitality of the priests who were entrusted with a mission which could so easily lead to a preoccupation with the material. The Archbishop writes:

There are priests whom the Church wishes to give to the world of the workers. She sends them thither to carry out in their midst the mission of the priest, to establish here the Kingdom of God. She does not send them to become factory workers or to become involved in militant worker activities. She authorized them to take jobs to the degree that that would help them to live in the conditions of the workers, and to fulfil the priestly work in the world of the workers. . . . This idea had gradually to be modified. Soon the workers had thought it their duty

to take active parts in the Syndicates and other movements. By degrees many of them became so occupied with these commitments that the priestly mission seemed to take second place, or at least its efficacy was compromised. Some of them risked a confusion between their apostolic action and her temporal commitments. . . . They seem to be men of a class, whereas the priest remains the man for everyone even when he is sent specially to some in particular.

At the same time the life of prayer of many of the priest-workers seems to have been compromised. They were led to suppress the recitation of a greater part of the breviary, often the whole of it, and habitually. Of late many frequently omitted the celebration of Mass. Perhaps they took care to preserve their union with God by prayer in their daily life. But the priest cannot renounce his mission to maintain the official prayer of the Church; one of his principal functions is to pray in the name of all the people, for the living and for the dead. It is hardly necessary to insist on the intensity of prayer required to preserve the priestly spirit.

The Archbishop also points out the essential function of the priest as a man of peace. He must therefore shun anything like class warfare.

The christian cannot accept the idea of a struggle in the spirit of hatred and violence. Such a struggle runs counter to the Gospel law of charity, it contradicts Christianity in its very essence. Forbidden to every christian, it is with greater reason forbidden to the priest who is by vocation a man of peace, one who is above all barriers of class or race, to effect reconciliation among men, to help them to understand how to gather all in Christ.

Quite evidently the new movement in France required the direction of authority if it was to preserve the supernatural vitality which gives it its effectiveness.

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